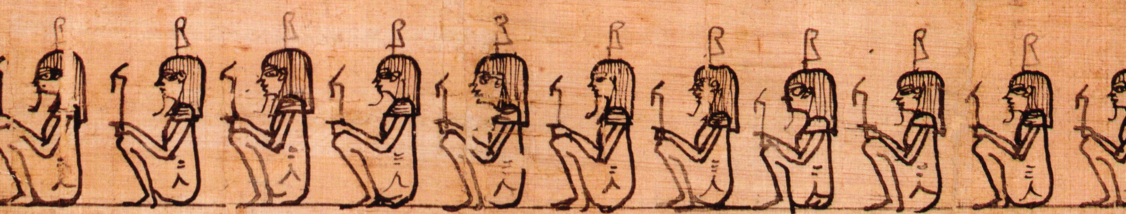


# THE MUMMIES

*from* **Egypt to Toledo**

FEBRUARY 3—MAY 6, 2018 | EXHIBITION GUIDE







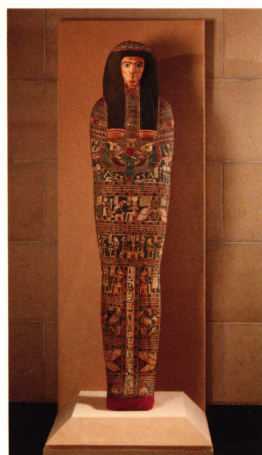
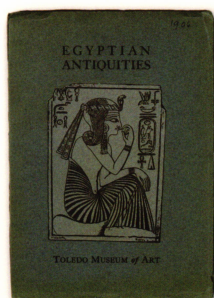
# THE MUMMIES: FROM EGYPT TO TOLEDO

Ancient Egypt has fascinated the people of the Western world since the ancient Greeks, but “Egyptomania” hit a cultural climax at two key points: Napoleon’s exploration of Egypt at the turn of the 19th century and the opening of King Tutankhamun’s tomb in 1922. These two events helped to propel ancient Egyptian culture into the Western imagination—where it remains today—through appropriation of iconography and imagery associated with Egyptian gods, kings, and mummies. This exhibition poses the question: How has Egyptomania impacted how we look at ancient Egyptian culture?

The enduring fascination with ancient Egypt is embedded in the early history of the Toledo Museum of Art. Among the earliest additions to the Museum’s collection are two human mummies and hundreds of objects acquired by TMA co-founders and benefactors Edward Drummond Libbey and Florence Scott Libbey when they traveled to Egypt in 1906. The two mummies, one of a young priest and the other of an old man, form the heart of this exhibition, which considers mummies in the context of Egyptomania, while also examining their original role within ancient Egyptian religious beliefs.

As you explore this exhibition, think about your own perceptions of ancient Egypt and how they’ve been influenced by Egypt’s portrayal in popular culture.






**ABOVE** *The Libbeyes in Giza, 1906.* **TOP RIGHT** *Cover of the 1906 exhibition guide for the unveiling of the treasures the Libbeyes brought back from Egypt.* **BOTTOM RIGHT** *Egypt, from Akhmim. Third Intermediate Period, Dynasty 22 (945–712 BCE), Cartonnage of Ankh-tesh. Cartonnage (linen, glue, and plaster with paint), about 800 BCE. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1906.4*

## THE LIBBEYS AND EGYPT

When Toledo Museum founders Edward Drummond Libbey and Florence Scott Libbey visited Egypt in early 1906, they purchased 239 ancient Egyptian artifacts and works of art—including Mummy of an Old Man and Mummy of a Young Priest—for the fledgling museum, founded only five years earlier. Back home, Mr. and Mrs. Libbey had two rooms built onto the small, original museum building at the corner of Madison and 13th Streets to display their new acquisitions. Fascinated by historical objects from so far away and long ago, people flocked to visit and have been coming to see the mummies and the Egyptian art ever since.



# EGYPTOMANIA: FROM NAPOLEON'S INVASION TO THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Ancient Egyptian culture dates back more than 5,000 years, but modern cultural appropriation of this society begins in earnest with French Emperor Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1795. Employing approximately 2,000 artists and technicians, Napoleon's forces documented all aspects of Egypt, from flora and fauna to ancient tombs, temples, and sculpture fragments. The subsequent publication of the seminal tome *Déscription de l'Égypte* beginning in 1809 marks the first time that ancient Egyptian imagery was published and distributed throughout western Europe.





- ◀ The satirical *Some Words with a Mummy*, written by Edgar Allan Poe in 1850, tells of the mummy of an ancient Egyptian named Allamistakeo who comes back to life to berate the group of scientists and amateur Egyptologists intent on dissecting him. It adds to the mummy mythology by suggesting that mummification acted as a kind of suspended animation, allowing embalmed Egyptians to be revived thousands of years later.

◀ **LEFT** Louis Legrand (French, 1863–1951), *Quinze histoires d'Edgar Poë (Fifteen Stories by Edgar [Allan] Poe)*. Book with aquatints, 1897. Gift of Molly and Walter Bareiss, 1984.674

In the early 20th century bath and beauty products also took advantage of Egyptomania, making their own marketing connections to ancient Egypt. Companies like Palmolive were quick to make associations between their products and what little was understood by most people about ancient Egyptian religious beliefs.

▶ **RIGHT** *Palmolive Shampoo*. Advertisement from *Ladies Home Journal*, 1918. Lent from the Brier-Remler Collection



- ◀ Fascination with ancient Egypt in Western culture at this time and into the late 1800s was reflected in upper class society through jewelry, clothing, cosmetics, and architecture based on objects and motifs like those documented in *Description de l'Égypte* and exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago.

◀ **LEFT** France (Paris), *Paintings Drawn from Mummy Cartonnages*, from *Description de l'Égypte*. Engraving, 1809–29. Lent from the Brier-Remler Collection





# EGYPTOMANIA: FROM THE OPENING OF KING TUT'S TOMB TO TODAY

The nature of Egyptomania transitions from one of romantic nostalgia to moribund mystery with the opening of King Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 by British archaeologist Howard Carter. No pharaoh's tomb had been found as fully intact as that of the young king. Word of the tomb discovery quickly spread as teams of photographers and reporters waited outside while dazzling objects were brought out. Toledo Museum of Art co-founders the Libbeys returned to Egypt in 1924 to visit the sites of Carter's excavations in Amarna. The extraordinary findings prompted another form of Egyptomania: Tutmania, with all things mummy being desired.

Since the mysterious deaths associated with the tomb's discovery—dubbed the “Curse of the Pharaoh”—ancient Egypt, and more specifically mummies, have been personified as icons of horror and camp in popular culture. From magic acts like George the Supreme Master of Magic to movies, notably Boris Karloff's *The Mummy* (released in 1932) and Hammer Studio's *The Mummy* (1959), our societal (mis)understanding of ancient Egypt still resides in the realm of the exotic and the fantastical. It is through this popular culture lens that we frequently see ancient Egypt and mummies. Mummies are sometimes perceived more as objects of curiosity—even fear—than as human remains carefully prepared in religious rites.





- ▲ These small mechanical pencils and fountain pens in the shapes of ancient Egyptian coffins could be worn as a pendant on a necklace when not in use as a writing utensil.

**ABOVE** *Mechanical Pencils and Fountain Pens in the Shape of Mummy Cases, 1920s. Lent from the Brier-Remler Collection*



- ▲ Jewelers at the turn of the 20th century and later capitalized on the rise of Egyptomania. One of the more popular icons in Egyptian-themed jewelry was the scarab beetle, a symbol of protection in ancient Egypt.

**ABOVE** *Bracelet with Scarab. Silver with enameling, 1920s. Lent from the Brier-Remler Collection*



# EGYPT AND THE AFTERLIFE

Many of the Egyptian art and objects familiar to us today were discovered in tombs. Tombs were designed to successfully transition one from 'this' world to the afterlife. Ancient Egyptians believed that death began a journey to the afterlife where all the necessities of their former lives, including their bodies, would be essential to eternal survival.



◀ The story of the god Osiris and his resurrection became key to the idea of life continuing in another sphere after death. According to one version of the myth, Osiris was murdered by his jealous brother Seth, who drowned him and then cut his body into pieces and scattered them up and down the Nile. His sister and wife, Isis, gathered the pieces of her husband and with the help of her sister Nephthys, Anubis (god of embalming), and Thoth (god of writing and magic) bandaged them together for burial to become the first mummy. Using magic, Isis revived Osiris's body and was able to conceive a son, Horus, the god identified with every ruler of Egypt. Osiris then descended to rule as king of the dead and god of rebirth and eternal life.



**TOP** Egypt, Late Period (712–332 BCE), Figure of Osiris. Bronze, solid cast, about 600–400 BCE. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1906.111

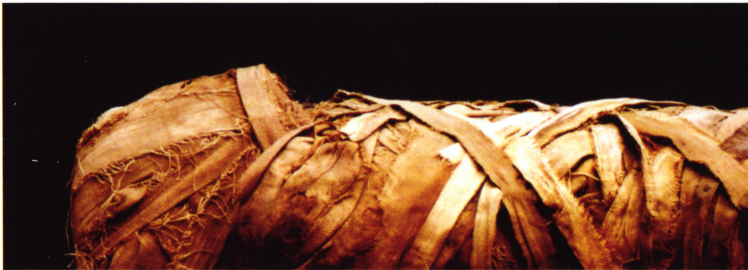
**BOTTOM** Egypt, Late Period, Dynasty 25 (712–664 BCE), Isis and Horus. Ivory with Egyptian blue inlays and traces of gilding, about 650 BCE. Orion Fund, 2011.14





◀ When this mummy was acquired in 1906, it was thought to be a woman because it came to the Museum in the coffin of a woman named Ta-mit. The mummy's pose, however—arms crossed on the chest—is a position known only for men. X-rays taken in 1997 and genetic testing conducted in 1998 confirmed that it is the body of a young adult male, likely about 20 years old. Radiocarbon dating determined that the young man died about 800 BCE. There is no evidence of cause of death. He was almost certainly a priest, because his head and body were completely shaved for ritual purification.

**LEFT** *Egypt, Third Intermediate Period, Dynasty 22 (945–712 BCE), Mummy of a Young Priest. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1906.1c*



▲ The intricate square pattern of the linen wrapping dates this mummy to 50–150 CE, when Egypt was part of the Roman Empire. He was 45 to 55 when he died, about the average life expectancy for his time. In addition to many missing teeth, bone loss in his jaws reveals severe gum disease and infection. One of his vertebrae is compressed as a result of fracture and the hip joint space has decreased in height. These details reveal a life of heavy labor, probably accompanied by severe, unrelenting pain.

**ABOVE** *Egypt, Roman Period (30 BCE–395 CE), Mummy of an Old Man. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1906.2c*





**ABOVE** *Children viewing Mummy of an Old Man at the Toledo Museum of Art, circa 1980s.*

## THE ETHICS OF EXHIBITING MUMMIES

In the early 20th century, when Mr. and Mrs. Libbey purchased Mummy of an Old Man and Mummy of a Young Priest and donated them to the Toledo Museum of Art, it was common to exhibit mummies as scientific and cultural curiosities. In recent decades, there has been world-wide dialogue about respect for national cultural patrimonies and reverent treatment of the remains of the dead, whether ancient mummies or more recent burials of indigenous peoples. In addition, the display of human remains in an art museum prompts its own questions of appropriateness.

However, the Toledo Museum of Art is responsible for the two mummies and continually monitors their condition in specially built, climate-controlled cases. Since 1997, they have only been exhibited as part of exhibitions in which they have been displayed respectfully, treated with dignity, and placed in the context of the ancient Egyptian preparation for the afterlife.

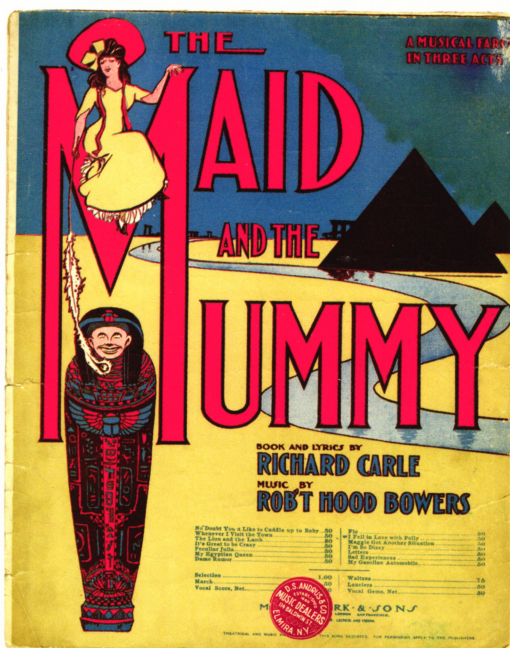
We hope this exhibition has raised questions about these issues for our visitors and has inspired examination of preconceived notions and myths about the people and culture of ancient Egypt.



# READING EGYPTOMANIA

The religious beliefs, everyday life, and cultural practices of ancient Egypt represent a timespan of thousands of years. From the 19th century to the present day, imagery from ancient Egyptian culture has been appropriated for architecture and design, advertisements, and popular culture. Appropriation, or the borrowing and alteration of images and cultural heritage, changes the context of what you see and what it means. It can cause us to lose sight of the real people and rich history of a culture/civilization in favor of stereotypes and misunderstandings. Consider the image reproduced here, the cover to the sheet music of a 1904 Broadway musical farce:

- What do you think the artist of the image and the composer and playwright were trying to convey by appropriating Egyptian culture for a musical comedy?
- How does it relate to the time and place in which the image and play were created?
- How does the coffin in the image differ from an actual ancient Egyptian sarcophagus (see the Cartonnage of Ankh-tesh on page 1)?
- How does your reaction to ancient Egyptian culture change based on the context in which you see it represented?



**LEFT** Richard Carle (book and lyrics), Robert Hood Bowers (music), Sheet Music: *The Maid and the Mummy (A Musical Farce in Three Acts)*, 1920s. Published by M. Witmark and Sons. Lent from the Brier-Remler Collection

# EXHIBITION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

For more details and more events, visit [toledomuseum.org/calendar](http://toledomuseum.org/calendar)

FEB  
03

## Curator Talk

**ADAM LEVINE AND MIKE DEETSCH, THE MUMMIES: FROM EGYPT TO TOLEDO**  
2 P.M. | LITTLE THEATER AND CANADAY GALLERY | FREE

FEB  
17  
to

## Saturday Movies

**HE WENT FOR A LITTLE WALK: MUMMIES IN THE MOVIES**  
2 P.M. | LITTLE THEATER | FREE FOR MEMBERS, \$5 FOR NON-MEMBERS  
\*DISCOUNT AVAILABLE WITH TICKET BUNDLES

MAY  
05

- **February 17** | The Mummy (1932)
- **February 24** | The Mummy's Hand (1940); The Mummy's Tomb (1942)
- **March 3** | The Mummy's Ghost (1944); The Mummy's Curse (1944)
- **March 10** | The Mummy (1959)
- **March 17** | The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb (1964)
- **March 24** | The Mummy's Shroud (1967)
- **April 7** | Blood from the Mummy's Tomb (1971, PG)
- **April 14** | The Night of Counting the Years; aka The Mummy (1969)
- **April 21** | The Mummy (1999, PG-13)
- **April 28** | Bubba Ho-Tep (2002, R)
- **May 5** | Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy (1955); Mummy Shorts (free of charge)

MARCH  
8–10

## Flashlight Tours

**MUMMIES BY MOO-LIGHT**  
MEET IN TMA GREEN ROOM | \$15 MEMBERS, \$20 NON-MEMBERS  
See *The Mummies: From Egypt to Toledo* in a whole “moo” light after being fortified by milk and cookies in the Green Room in these family-friendly, docent-led flashlight tours.

- **Thursday, March 8** | 9 P.M. tour (8–8:45 in Green Room)
- **Friday, March 9** | 9 P.M. tour (8–8:45 in Green Room)
- **Saturday, March 10** | 6 P.M. tour (5–5:45 in Green Room)
- **Saturday, March 10** | 7:30 P.M. tour (6:30–7:15 in Green Room)

MARCH  
29

## Masters Series Lecture

**BOB BRIER, EGYPTOMANIA: OUR THREE THOUSAND YEAR OBSESSION WITH THE LAND OF THE PHAROAHs**  
6 P.M. | PERISTYLE | FREE  
Bob Brier (known as “Mr. Mummy”), Egyptologist and collector of Egyptomania memorabilia, explores the burning fascination with all things Egyptian and the events that fanned the flames. Presented by the TMA Ambassadors.

APRIL  
19

## Masters Series/AIA-Toledo Society Lecture

**SALIMA IKRAM, MAY THEY LIVE FOREVER: ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MUMMIES**  
6 P.M. | PERISTYLE | FREE  
Dr. Salima Ikram, professor of Egyptology at the American University, Cairo, explains the evolving details of mummification over time and the ways scholars now use their analysis of mummies to explain the history, economy, culture, and religion of ancient Egypt. Presented by the Archaeological Institute of America-Toledo Society and the Toledo Museum of Art and sponsored in part by the TMA Ambassadors.

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